

## **The Transformational Leadership of The Principal in Fostering a Collaborative Culture Among Educators at State Senior High School 1 Percut Sei Tuan**

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**Abstract:** This study aims to describe the role of the principal's transformational leadership in forming a collaborative culture among educators at SMA Negeri 1 Percut Sei Tuan. The background of this study is based on the importance of teacher collaboration to improve the quality of education and the role of leaders who encourage positive change. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation from the principal, teachers, and students. The results showed that the principal implemented transformational leadership principles, such as teacher empowerment, building a shared vision, and creating a collaborative environment. The strategies used included the formation of the MGMP community, regular meetings, open communication, and support for teacher innovation. This study also found that educators' internal motivation and communicative leadership were key to creating a sustainable collaborative culture. These findings contribute significantly to the development of more adaptive and participatory education management.

**Keywords:** Transformational Leadership, Principal, Collaborative Culture.

## **A. Introduction**

Education serves as a fundamental pillar of society, acting as a catalyst for personal growth, social development, and economic advancement (Tan & Low, 2019). The principal plays a pivotal role in this system and is therefore expected to encourage, mobilize, guide, direct, and take action to achieve predetermined objectives (Nurabadi et al., 2021). As the leader of the school, the principal holds a significant responsibility in meeting the expectations of various stakeholders. Consequently, principals are required to be capable of directing, organizing, and setting an example for school personnel in order to attain shared goals (Sunardi et al., 2019). One influential approach to achieving these goals is through transformational leadership.

Leadership is a critical factor that must be possessed by a school principal. According to Kartono as cited in Priansa (2014, p. 162), leadership is the ability to exert a constructive influence on others to engage in cooperative efforts aimed at achieving pre-established goals. Meanwhile, Syarifudin (2011, p. 108) defines leadership as a process of interaction between a leader and their followers within a group or organization. In carrying out their leadership duties, leaders influence, direct, and motivate all members of the group to utilize the organization's resources effectively in pursuit of its goals (Minsih et al., 2019).

Transformational leadership is a concept that was first introduced by Downton (1973) and later expanded by Burns (2012) (Milan, 2020). Transformational leaders cultivate a supportive and nurturing environment that fosters collaboration and teamwork. They value and respect the contributions of each member, promoting a sense of unity and shared responsibility. By establishing strong relationships and fostering a culture of trust, transformational leaders lay the foundation for continuous

improvement and sustainable growth (Addin et al., 2020).

Transformational leadership is defined as a leadership approach that utilizes charisma and intellectual stimulation to drive transformation and revitalize an organization (Sinaga et al., 2021). This type of leadership possesses specific characteristics that distinguish it from other leadership styles. These characteristics represent the traits or attributes of transformational leadership. Over time, scholars have articulated different characteristics in line with the evolving context of leadership studies. According to Assingkily and Mesiono (2019), the key characteristics of transformational leadership include:

1. A leader who possesses integrity and independence in realizing the organization's vision.
2. Subordinates must develop an awareness of the importance of unity in achieving goals, reinforced by motivational support and encouragement from the leader.
3. All members within a transformational leadership framework must be willing and prepared to make personal sacrifices for the benefit of the organization without expecting any form of reward.

Effective leadership strategies in Islamic educational institutions have a positive impact on improving teacher quality. Through continuous professional development, mentoring and coaching, the provision of autonomy and trust, effective communication, fair performance evaluations, and the cultivation of a collaborative culture, leaders can create an environment that enables teachers to reach their full potential in supporting quality education (Maolana et al., 2023).

Organizational culture plays a crucial role in achieving institutional goals, as it reflects the identity or personality of an organization. This culture is established by the founders through the vision, mission,

and objectives upon which the organization is built, and is further reinforced through strategies designed to achieve those goals (Syafriani & Ramadhani, 2023). According to Nelson and Quick, organizational culture serves four primary functions: fostering a sense of identity and enhancing organizational commitment, serving as a tool for organizing members, reinforcing core organizational values, and functioning as a control mechanism over behavior. A strong organizational culture instills trust, influences behavior, and standardizes practices without the need for constant justification. In this way, organizational culture acts as a social adhesive that unifies members in the pursuit of shared goals and provides a framework for the values and actions expected from all members. It also serves as a behavioral control mechanism for all organizational elements (Wijaya et al., 2022).

From an educational environment perspective, collaboration refers to cooperative actions undertaken by school members to achieve work-related goals. These actions may include sharing values through teacher learning, which can ultimately influence instructional practices and student achievement (Shakenova, 2017). Collaborative activities involve engaging others in setting common goals, sharing responsibilities, and working together to achieve outcomes that surpass individual efforts (Barfield, 2016).

Collaboration is one of the essential competencies that teachers must master in the current educational landscape. It is manifested through relationship patterns among individuals who are willing to share and support one another (Faturhman, 2022). By engaging in collaborative practices, teachers can foster a productive environment that benefits them individually and strengthens the broader school community. Examples of collaborative practices among teachers include discussion groups, team-based tasks, and school-based professional learning communities (such as KKG mini in Indonesian schools).

Teacher collaboration represents a cooperative effort aimed at achieving shared goals in improving various aspects of teaching and learning (Kasmawati, 2020). Professional collaboration among teachers can contribute to the development of pedagogical knowledge, teaching experience, and content expertise (Diniyah et al., 2023). This occurs through the exchange of insights, teaching experiences, and instructional strategies among peers. Research on teacher collaboration has been more extensively conducted in developed countries and tends to focus on student outcomes rather than on the principal's role in facilitating such collaboration. Conversely, studies exploring teacher collaboration in developing countries-particularly in Indonesia remain limited. Given these circumstances, and considering the significant benefits of collaboration for teachers, it is crucial to examine how principals can play a role in encouraging effective teacher collaboration to enhance teaching quality.

Teacher collaboration is a vital component of teachers' professional lives, serving as a means of improving instructional practice. Through collaboration, teachers can share knowledge, reflect on their teaching experiences, offer mutual support and feedback, and jointly design teaching methods (Vangrieken et al., 2015). In the educational context, collaboration focuses on dialogue and the exchange of ideas among teachers (Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2017). One of the primary objectives of teacher collaboration is to integrate school improvement efforts by reducing teacher isolation, thereby enabling teachers to share expertise and observe one another's practices for collective reflection and growth.

Effective collaboration between principals and teachers can foster a shared perspective, thereby facilitating the achievement of the school's vision and mission. Moreover, both parties must serve as role models for students, as students are often more influenced by

the behaviors demonstrated by educators and school leaders than by their peers. The collaborative process is also shaped by personal traits and individual character, which play a significant role in fostering mutual understanding and cooperation (Ramdani et al., 2019). This study aims to explore how school principals can adopt a transformational leadership approach to cultivate an effective collaborative culture. By examining the strategies and dynamics involved in building a collaborative work environment, the study seeks to contribute both theoretically and practically to the development of educational management that is more responsive and better aligned with the challenges of contemporary education.

## **B. Methods**

This study employs a qualitative approach using a descriptive qualitative method, which aligns with the research objective: to examine the transformational leadership of the school principal in fostering a collaborative culture among educators at SMA Negeri 1 Percut Sei Tuan. Qualitative research is defined as a strategy for interpreting meaning, understanding concepts, characteristics, phenomena, symbols, or descriptions of a particular issue. It is characterized by its naturalistic and holistic nature, its emphasis on quality, the use of multiple methods, and narrative presentation in scientific inquiry (Sidiq & Choiri, 2019).

In order to gather information and data on a phenomenon as it naturally occurs—specifically, the transformational leadership of the school principal in fostering a collaborative culture among educators at SMA Negeri 1 Percut Sei Tuan—the researcher uses a descriptive qualitative study approach. Techniques for gathering data include documentation, interviews, and observation. In order to depict and portray real-world situations in the field, a combination of field and library research is used in this sort of qualitative study. Direct interviews with the principal, teachers, and students were used to collect the data.

## **C. Results and Discussion**

This section presents the findings of the research, beginning with a description of the field setting, followed by the data and information obtained, and concluding with a discussion of the field research results. As outlined in the previous sections, this study focuses on the transformational leadership of the school principal in fostering a collaborative culture among educators at SMA Negeri 1 Percut Sei Tuan. The research findings are elaborated as follows:

### **The Role of the Principal's Transformational Leadership in Shaping a Collaborative Culture Among Educators at SMA Negeri 1 Percut Sei Tuan**

As is well known, the study on the transformational leadership of the school principal in fostering a collaborative culture among educators at SMA Negeri 1 Percut Sei Tuan aims, among other objectives, to understand how the principal's transformational leadership shapes this collaborative culture.

SMA Negeri 1 Percut Sei Tuan is a senior high school undergoing significant transformation in the working dynamics of its educators. This change centers on the role and leadership style of the principal, who implements transformational leadership. Transformational leadership is essentially a process of building commitment toward organizational goals while empowering followers with trust to achieve these goals.

The theory of transformational leadership examines how leaders change organizational culture, restructure the organization, and implement management strategies to accomplish organizational objectives (Iqbal, 2021). In the context of SMA Negeri 1 Percut Sei Tuan, the implementation of transformational leadership by the school principal is specifically aimed at fostering a strong

collaborative culture among teachers through the application of several strategies. As explained by Mr. Drs. Oloan P. Pangaribuan, M.Pd, the principal of SMA Negeri 1 Percut Sei Tuan:

*“In establishing a collaborative culture among educators at this school, I apply the principles of transformational leadership. The strategies we implement focus on teacher empowerment, the development of a shared vision, and the creation of a work environment that supports professional growth”.* (Oloan Pangaribuan, 10 Mei, 2025)

Based on the interview results, it was found that in shaping a collaborative culture among educators at the school, the principal applies the principles of transformational leadership. This is reflected in strategies focused on teacher empowerment, such as providing opportunities for active participation in decision-making and encouraging initiative and innovation in the learning process. In addition, the principal emphasizes the importance of developing a shared vision that involves all educators, thus creating alignment and a common goal in improving the quality of education. A work environment that supports professional growth is continuously fostered through various training programs and collaborative forums, ultimately strengthening engagement and cooperation among educators.

During the interview, the principal stated that he implements the principles of transformational leadership in cultivating a collaborative culture among teachers at the school. These principles include:

1. Simplification, this refers to one of the key elements of successful leadership: having a clear and well-defined vision, mission, and objectives.
2. Motivation, In the context of transformational leadership, motivation refers to a leader's ability to provide intrinsic

motivation to subordinates, meaning motivation that originates from within the individual (Azizil Bana, 2016).

3. Facilitation, Transformational leadership involves facilitating the development and maintenance of positive and collaborative relationships among subordinates and with other stakeholders.
4. Innovation A transformational leader with a high level of innovation is capable of generating new ideas and applying creative solutions, particularly within the field of Islamic education.
5. Mobilization, A transformational leader possesses the ability to mobilize all available resources to empower and support every individual involved in achieving the established vision and goals.
6. Open-mindedness, This requires leaders to remain responsive to change and to adapt quickly. In facing change, it is essential for leaders to be open and receptive to feedback and suggestions from others.
7. Determination A leader must have strong determination. A leader with firm resolve is capable of overcoming obstacles and challenges encountered along the way (Iqbal, 2021).

Furthermore, the principal stated that several strategies have been implemented to cultivate a collaborative culture among educators at SMA Negeri 1 Percut Sei Tuan. He emphasized that:

*"I consistently involve educators in shaping the school's vision so that every teacher feels a shared sense of purpose. This fosters a continuous sense of responsibility and collaboration. I also provide space for teachers to design and implement project-based learning programs and support every creative initiative they propose. We regularly hold discussion forums and monthly meetings that promote openness and mutual respect for ideas". (Oloan Pangaribuan, 15 Mei 2025).*

Active involvement of teachers in the formulation of the school's vision is one of the principal strategies implemented. The principal stated that by engaging educators in the vision-building process, each teacher develops a shared sense of responsibility toward the school's direction and objectives. This fosters a stronger sense of ownership and promotes sustained collaboration among educators. Furthermore, the principal provides opportunities for teachers to design and implement project-based learning programs, while also supporting creative initiatives proposed by the teaching staff. These practices not only enhance teachers' motivation but also reinforce professional collaboration among them.

Routine activities such as discussion forums and monthly meetings also serve as strategic platforms to cultivate a culture of mutual respect, openness, and cooperation within the working environment. In addition to the interview with Mr. Drs. Oloan P. Pangaribuan, M.Pd, the principal of SMA Negeri 1 Percut Sei Tuan, the researcher also conducted an interview with Ms. Nurlatifah Harahap, M.Pd, a mathematics teacher at the same school. From this interview, the researcher obtained further insights into the strategies employed by the principal in fostering collaborative culture among educators.

*“ The first strategy involves fostering mutual familiarity between the principal and the educators, as well as among the educators themselves. This is followed by motivating the teachers to perform their respective duties effectively. Furthermore, collaboration is encouraged among teachers within the same subject area. Most importantly, effective communication is consistently applied as a key element in building a collaborative environment.”(Nurlatifah Harahap, 16 Mei, 2025).*

Based on the results of the interview, it was revealed that the first strategy involves building personal bonds not merely formal relationships between superiors and subordinates, but genuine efforts to foster mutual understanding among all elements of the school community. The principal believes that when a school leader understands the background, potential, and even the challenges faced by educators, a bridge of empathy is naturally established. The same emphasis is placed on relationships among educators themselves: building strong interpersonal connections helps to create a supportive and collaborative working environment.

Beyond familiarity, the next strategy focuses on cultivating intrinsic motivation. The principal recognizes that a teacher's dedication is not solely driven by obligation, but by a deep internal motivation. Thus, various efforts are made to inspire and appreciate the teachers' performance, instill a sense of ownership toward the school's vision, and encourage continuous professional growth in fulfilling their educational responsibilities.

Furthermore, the principal promotes close collaboration among teachers, particularly within the same subject area. This collaboration is expected to enrich perspectives, facilitate the sharing of best practices, and foster innovation in teaching methods. The exchange of ideas and experiences among colleagues is believed to enhance the overall quality of teaching and learning.

The principal further emphasizes the importance of effective communication. Strong communication skills serve as a crucial foundation for the principal to achieve the goal of creating a collaborative work environment. Through appropriate communication, the principal is able to foster teachers' intrinsic motivation and encourage their active participation in various collaborative activities. Mrs. Nurlatifah Harahap, M.Pd, also noted that the educators at SMA Negeri 1 Percut Sei Tuan have formed a

community known as the MGMP (Subject Teacher Forum) among teachers:

The teachers here have also established an MGMP, or Subject Teacher Forum, which is a discussion group consisting of teachers from the same subject area—for example, physics teachers collaborating with other physics teachers. This MGMP community enables subject teachers to engage in discussions and exchange ideas related to teaching and learning.” (Nurlatifah Harahap, 16 Mei, 2025)

Saondi (2010:10) describes MGMP (Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran or Subject Teacher Forum) as a professional forum for teachers based on subject areas, which is systematically organized and specifically aimed at developing standardized concepts and national-level subject assessments. According to Mulyasa (2008:36), MGMP serves as an effective platform for enhancing teachers’ competencies and professionalism. This is reflected in the role and function of MGMP as a place where teachers can discuss and analyze the challenges they face in the classroom, as well as exchange ideas to design and implement learning models more effectively and efficiently.

Furthermore, Mulyasa (2007) states that the effectiveness of MGMP contributes to improving both the professionalism and performance of teachers. Through MGMP activities, all teachers have opportunities to improve their performance in fulfilling their duties as educators and to align their perceptions with colleagues teaching the same subjects. Schools that have successfully developed MGMP activities tend to better address various difficulties and problems faced by teachers and students during the learning process. In every MGMP meeting, teachers of the same subject area come together to solve problems collaboratively to enhance overall teacher performance.

MGMP can be regarded as an optimal model to support teachers in continuous competency development. A teacher's professional growth becomes more attainable when they are willing to engage in learning and exchange ideas with fellow educators. Naturally, the challenges faced by each teacher differ from those encountered by others. Therefore, through MGMP, teachers gain valuable input from their peers to solve various problems and strive to enhance their competencies.

Suyanto (2013) explains that the general objective of establishing MGMP is to foster creativity and innovation in improving teacher professionalism, while the specific objectives of MGMP establishment are:

1. To broaden the insights and knowledge of subject teachers in efforts to realize effective, efficient, and enjoyable learning;
2. To develop a conducive classroom culture as a place for a pleasant, engaging, and intellectually stimulating learning process for students
3. To establish cooperation with the community as partners of teachers in implementing the learning process.

In fostering collaboration among educators at SMA Negeri 1 Percut Sei Tuan, the principal undertakes several initiatives, as explained by the principal in the following interview:

“As a leader, one form of my communication with educators is through regularly scheduled monthly teacher meetings. Additionally, I maintain individual communication with teachers. Thus, communication is not limited to meetings but also involves open dialogue where teachers can express any challenges or issues they face during the teaching process. Typically, teacher meetings are held monthly; however, if urgent matters arise or important issues need to be addressed, the school will convene meetings as necessary”. (Oloan Pangaribuan, 13 Mei, 2025).

Mr. Drs. Oloan P. Pangaribuan, M.Pd, the principal, stated that effective communication is a crucial element in fostering a collaborative culture among educators. He explained that communication is not only conducted formally through monthly teacher meetings but also personally through individual-to-individual approaches. Through this interpersonal communication, educators are given the opportunity to openly express challenges or issues they face during the teaching and learning process. The monthly meetings serve as a forum for coordination and collective reflection; however, if urgent matters arise, the school flexibly holds additional meetings. This open and responsive communication strategy strengthens trust, encourages active participation, and promotes the development of a dynamic collaborative culture within the school environment. Furthermore, the principal emphasized that communication is one of the primary factors in establishing a collaborative culture among educators: "The primary factor in developing a collaborative culture among educators at SMA Negeri 1 Percut Sei Tuan is communication between the principal and the teachers; this is considered the most crucial element.". (Oloan Pangaribuan, 16 Mei, 2025)

Based on the interview results, it can be concluded that the primary factor in establishing a collaborative culture among educators at SMA Negeri 1 Percut Sei Tuan is the communication between the principal and the teachers. Effective communication serves as the fundamental foundation that unites all elements of the school to work together towards shared progress. Several prominent communication experts in Indonesia, such as Prof. Burhan Bungin, Gun Gun Heryanto, Ade Armando, and Effendi Gozali, emphasize that communication is conducted to achieve positive relational outcomes.

The importance of effective communication between the principal and educators is also reflected in efforts to create a conducive work

climate at the school. With smooth communication and good cooperation, teachers feel heard, valued, and supported in carrying out their educational duties (Amalia & Samsudin, 2022).

The researcher also conducted an interview with Syarifah, a student of SMA Negeri 1 Percut Sei Tuan, class XI-MIPA 3:

*“In my observation, it is evident that the teachers here cooperate and foster a collaborative atmosphere among educators. I often see, during breaks or after classes, several teachers gathering in the glass room to discuss teaching methods or share their experiences from the day’s lessons. For instance, when we have art or entrepreneurship project assignments at school, other teachers willingly assist both us students and the subject teachers involved in those projects. Thus, it can be said that the educators here do not only focus on their own subjects but are also willing to collaborate with other teachers. I believe the leadership of the principal, who regularly holds meetings and training sessions, plays a significant role in shaping this collaborative culture among educators.”(Syarifah, 17 Mei, 2025)*

From the interview, it was revealed that a culture of mutual support exists among the teachers at the school. Syarifah explained that teachers are often seen discussing outside of class hours to talk about teaching methods and student activities, as well as exchanging information about effective instructional approaches. Collaboration is also evident in cross-subject activities, such as accompanying students during competitions or school projects. According to her, this collaborative culture is inseparable from the principal’s role in applying a transformational leadership style. The principal is regarded as actively encouraging and facilitating cooperation among teachers through meetings, training sessions, and direct involvement in various activities. This demonstrates that inspirational and supportive leadership can successfully foster a collaborative and positive working environment among educators.

One of the students from class XI-Mipa 5, named Raja, also mentioned that collaboration among teachers has a positive impact on students' learning motivation at the school:

*“Yes, I feel more motivated to learn when the teachers collaborate in delivering lessons and support each other during the learning process. With the collaboration among educators, I find it easier to understand the material and become more interested. Moreover, when teachers support one another, the classroom atmosphere feels more positive and less monotonous. I believe this is also thanks to our principal, who consistently encourages teachers to work together. The principal often sets examples of good cooperation and facilitates activities that strengthen teacher unity”.* (Raja, 17 Mei, 2025)

Raja expressed that when teachers collaborate in delivering lessons, especially when materials from several subjects are interconnected and explained in an integrated manner, understanding becomes easier and the learning process feels more engaging. Collaboration among educators also fosters a more conducive and enjoyable classroom environment, making students feel more attended to and supported.

### **Challenges Faced by the Principal in Developing a Collaborative Culture Among Educators at SMA Negeri 1 Percut Sei Tuan**

Not all expectations can be fully met; however, many challenges remain faced by the principal in fostering a collaborative culture among educators at SMA Negeri 1 Percut Sei Tuan. There are certainly various obstacles encountered in developing this collaborative culture because collaboration involves more than one individual, often many individuals with diverse backgrounds and differing personalities.

Challenges in collaboration may include individual challenges, organizational challenges, social challenges, and organic challenges. An example of an individual challenge is the motivation for power. According to McClelland, human character exhibits various forms of motivation. Individuals motivated by a desire for power or dominance are often unsuitable and unable to engage effectively in collaboration. This occurs because such individuals lack self-assessment abilities, tend to perceive their contributions as greater than those of others, undervalue the contributions of others, and fear losing control, quality, autonomy, identity, or resources (Ngambut, 2023).

In the effort to establish a strong collaborative culture within the school environment, the role of the principal as a transformational leader becomes crucial. A physics teacher at SMA Negeri 1 Percut Sei Tuan, Mrs. Evi Juliani, S.Pd, M.Si, emphasizes that the principal needs to consistently apply transformational leadership to encourage effective cooperation among educators. This type of leadership is considered capable of inspiring teachers to support one another, share knowledge, and unify their vision for collective progress. The principal is also advised to serve as a role model in fostering open communication and building trust among teachers, for example through regular and structured interdisciplinary discussion forums. Recognition of collaborative initiatives is also deemed important in maintaining teacher motivation. Through this approach, the collaborative culture will not only develop but also become deeply rooted as part of the school's professional climate.

Based on the statement above, the researcher conducted an interview with the principal of SMA Negeri 1 Percut Sei Tuan. The results of the interview with Mr. Drs. Oloan P. Pangaribuan, M.Pd are as follows: "The primary challenge I face is time management, as I have a fairly busy schedule. Secondly, educators have limited understanding of the theoretical implementation involved in

fostering a collaborative culture; in fact, they have some understanding but lack deeper insight. Furthermore, the existing work culture, which is not yet fully collaborative, also poses a significant obstacle. The work culture that has been established over many years cannot be changed instantly. It requires time and consistent efforts in setting examples to cultivate a genuine collective spirit among educators” (Oloan Pangaribuan, 17 Mei,2025)

In an interview conducted with the principal of SMA Negeri 1 Percut Sei Tuan, Mr. Drs. Oloan P. Pangaribuan, M.Pd, he revealed several key challenges faced in fostering a collaborative culture within the school environment. The first challenge highlighted was the issue of limited time. With a demanding schedule as the principal, it is often difficult to be fully involved directly in every collaborative process intended to be developed with the educators. This becomes an obstacle in providing consistent guidance and ensuring that each process runs optimally.

The second challenge is the lack of deep understanding among educators regarding the theoretical implementation of a collaborative culture. Although most teachers already have a basic understanding of the importance of collaboration, this understanding has not fully reached the practical and in-depth aspects. This results in suboptimal implementation of the collaborative culture due to lingering doubts and uncertainties in its execution.

Furthermore, he also pointed out that the work culture, which is not yet fully collaborative, poses a significant barrier. The work culture that has been established over many years tends to be individualistic and unaccustomed to structured teamwork. According to him, cultural change is not something that can be achieved instantly. It requires time, exemplary leadership, and consistency in actions to cultivate a collective spirit and a sense of ownership among

educators.

The principal formulated strategies to overcome obstacles in establishing a collaborative culture among educators. The following is an excerpt from the author's interview with Mr. Drs. Oloan P. Pangaribuan, M.Pd, the principal:

*“One of the solutions I have implemented to address these challenges is maintaining good communication with the educators. For instance, regarding the time constraint, we communicate with the educators to identify suitable times for collaboration with other teachers. Acknowledging that a busy schedule is a significant challenge, I strive to improve time management efficiency. Second, concerning educators’ understanding of the theoretical implementation of a collaborative culture, I recognize that further in-depth exploration is necessary. Therefore, we plan to organize training sessions or internal discussions to help teachers gain a deeper understanding of the concept of collaboration and how to concretely implement it in their daily practice. Third, changing a work culture that has been deeply rooted over many years cannot be achieved instantly. I am aware that this requires time, patience, and most importantly, exemplary leadership. Together with the leadership team, I will continuously strive to set an example by fostering a collective spirit, promoting open cooperation, and nurturing healthy communication among educators. We will also create collaborative spaces that encourage positive interaction among teachers..”.* (Oloan Pangaribuan, 17 Mei, 2025)

In the effort to foster a collaborative culture among educators, the principal acknowledges several challenges that must be addressed, as previously mentioned. As a solution, the principal emphasizes the importance of effective and flexible communication, particularly regarding time constraints. He encourages reaching a mutual agreement on scheduling to ensure collaboration can occur without disrupting educators’ primary responsibilities. Additionally, the

principal has designed training programs and internal discussions to deepen teachers' understanding of both the theory and practice of collaboration. He recognizes that transforming the work culture cannot be achieved instantly but requires a continuous process. Therefore, leadership by example, a strong commitment to building a collective spirit, and the creation of collaborative spaces are concrete steps consistently pursued to realize positive interactions and productive collaboration within the school environment.

#### **D. Conclusions**

This study demonstrates that the transformational leadership of the principal at SMA Negeri 1 Percut Sei Tuan significantly contributes to the development of a collaborative culture among educators. The principal acts as a catalyst for change by applying transformational leadership principles such as vision simplification, intrinsic motivation, team facilitation, innovation, and consistent exemplary behavior. This approach not only encourages active participation from teachers but also creates collaborative spaces, such as subject teacher working groups (MGMP), which effectively enhance educators' professionalism. However, the implementation of a collaborative culture still faces several challenges, including time constraints, limited in-depth understanding of the collaboration concept among educators, and a deeply rooted individualistic work culture. Therefore, change requires consistent communication, strengthening teachers' capacity through training, and exemplary leadership from the school administration.

As a solution for implementing a collaborative culture among educators, it is recommended that schools design continuous training programs on collaborative culture and participative leadership for teachers. Additionally, a system of rewards and evaluations should be established to encourage consistent collaborative practices. Local governments or education offices can

also develop supportive policies that promote principals to take an active role as transformational leaders in other educational units.

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